

Turn the Tables to Get In Sync

When we think about the gospels – Matthew, Mark, Luke and John – Mark isn't usually the first place we go. Yet Mark, listening to the eyewitness accounts of Peter, wrote a fast-paced gospel sharing the miraculous things Jesus did, including His death and Resurrection, to convince his Roman readers that Jesus is the Son of God. Let's not overlook what we can learn about our Savior in the overlooked gospel.



INTRODUCTION

Our relationship with God is a day-by-day and sometimes moment-by-moment process. In this dance with God that we have, however, sometimes we find ourselves out of step or “out of sync” with Him, and possibly with those around us. To remain in step with God and others, we need to dig deep into His Word. When we view our world through His eyes, we can recognize roadblocks in our pathway, learn how to remove those roadblocks, and study ways to view our surrounding culture. Understanding cultural elements from today's passage helps us better understand the lessons that Jesus was teaching his disciples.

STARTER QUESTION

We all face times when we feel out of sync with God. Have you ever tried to complete a task and just could not get “on the same page” with others? Do you ever feel like your prayers are not being answered? Do you struggle to identify with challenging cultural issues? These times may call for change...how do you feel about change?

INTO THE WORD

Refer to Joshua 1:9, Deuteronomy 31:8, and Proverbs 3: 5-6. What are some of the things, good or bad, that are changing in our world today? Are you embracing or fearing these changes? What tells us that we can trust God to NEVER change (refer to James 1:17, Malachi 3:6)?

In Mark 11:17 and Jeremiah 7:11, reference is made to the temple becoming “a den of robbers.” What transactions were going on in the temple to anger the Lord? How did godliness go missing from the temple? What does 1 Corinthians 3:16 remind us about the temple? How do the conditions of the temple in Mark 11 relate to Galatians 5:19-21? How can we maintain godliness when we are often surrounded by ungodliness?

Mark 11:24 refers to resilient faith in God. How do we obtain resilient, enduring faith? One way we can grow our faith is to spend time in prayer. What changes is the Holy Spirit calling you to in your prayer life to grow your faith? Provide examples of how the Lord has already grown your faith through your prayer life.

APPLICATION

Pastor David discussed how we can view our culture using God as our filter. What are some examples of seeing God as the filter through which we view culture today? How can this view lead us to become godly? How do we strike a balance between avoiding ungodly behavior and being a light to those who are not Christ followers?

Pastor David referred to the following list of godly qualities based upon Galatians 5: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, happiness, self-control, generosity, relational wholeness, financial responsibility, and contented living. He also referred to a list of ungodly qualities: Sexual immorality, impure thoughts, hostility, quarreling, jealousy, lying, outbursts of anger, drunkenness, wild parties, and strife. We are given instructions in this chapter to “live by the Spirit” to exhibit the above godly qualities. What are some ways we can do this? What should our response be to other Christ followers who may need help in these areas?

Pastor David discussed how true worship is not just singing in church on Sunday morning. What does true worship mean in your life? Provide examples of how we as a church can worship God. Provide examples of how we can worship God individually in our hearts and lives on a daily basis.

PRAYER

Dear Lord, help us to endure the challenges we face in our lives. When we feel out of sync, remind us of the ways we can refocus our attention on You and of the grace You give us to help us realign with Your ways. Give us an attitude of forgiveness and let our faith in you grow daily as we surrender all our troubles to you. Help us to maintain focus as we worship you through our words and our actions, especially as we interact with those around us.